

CASE REPORT

Bite Wounds Caused by a Wild Boar: A Case Report

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A 74-year-old man was attacked by a wild boar while on his way home from his farm in the daytime in winter 2017 on the rural Izu peninsula. He did not provoke the boar; however, hunters were hunting animals in the mountains near the farm around the same time. The boar bit his left leg, and the man fell to the ground. The boar continued biting the man's left leg, and the man delivered a few kicks to the boar's face with his right leg. The boar then bit his right foot and ran away. The man was taken to a hospital, and a physical examination revealed 3 bite wounds on his left leg and right foot. The wounds were irrigated with sterilized saline and closed with sutures under local anesthesia. He received antibiotics and a tetanus toxoid booster. The next day, his wounds were found to be infected, and pus was drained from them. After these treatments, his wounds healed successfully. Animal bite wounds are frequently contaminated. Accordingly, in addition to early proper wound treatment, close observation of the wound is required for both the early detection of any signs of infection and early medical intervention, including appropriate drainage of pus and irrigation as necessary.

Keywords: boar, bite, infection

Introduction

Wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) exist worldwide. Their breeding period in most areas lasts into the winter season. They reach maturity in 2 years and live for approximately 10 years.¹ In Japan, there are 2 kinds of wild boar: *Sus scrofa leucomystax* (Japanese wild boar), which is the main species of wild boar in Japan, and *Sus scrofa riukiuanus* (Ryukyu wild boar), which can only be found in the Okinawa prefecture. The height of an adult Japanese wild boar ranges from 100 to 170 cm, with a shoulder height of 60 to 90 cm, corresponding to roughly the thigh level of an adult human. Their weight ranges from 80 to 220 kg. Both male and female boars have tusks in the mandible and maxilla that are sharpened by rubbing against each other (Figure 1). Male tusks grow to up to 15 cm in length. Japanese wild boars can reach running speeds of 40 km/h from a standing start and can jump over 1 m in height. They are

polyphagous and eat root vegetables, nuts, insects, and worms. They breed once a year.

Recently, these boars have begun to explore human properties looking for food waste to eat or crops to forage. This behavior increases the risk of wild boar-induced trauma to humans living in certain areas of Japan. Kobe City has reported a number of human victims of boar attack every year.² The victims include those with wounds not only directly inflicted by boars but also those induced by falling after being attacked by boars. The maximum number of incidents reported annually between 2007 and 2014 was 76 in 2010 (2007: 2; 2008: 1; 2009: 2; 2010: 76; 2011: 21; 2012: 18; 2013: 27; and 2014: 66), with 26.6 ± 29.1 (mean \pm SD) casualties per year based on reports from Kobe City. The number of victims did not decrease despite the legalization of hunting wild boars, perhaps due to human-generated feeding or leaving unharvested fruit in farm fields. Wild boar attacks on humans have been reported by the mass media in Japan, and these reports are summarized in Table 1,³ (and ecolumn.net, unpublished data, 2007) including the number of humans experiencing attacks and the wound site. We are unaware

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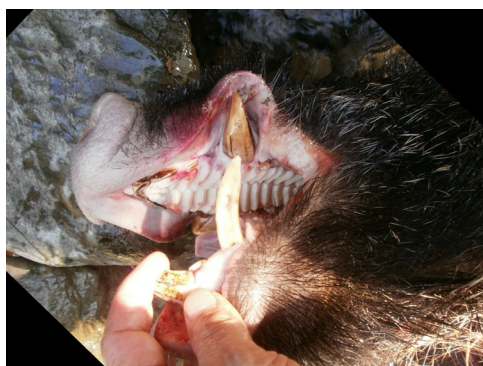


Figure 1. The tusks of a Japanese wild boar. Boars have tusks at the mandible and maxilla.

of any published English medical reports concerning Japanese wild boar attacks.

We herein report a case of bite wounds sustained by a human after a Japanese wild boar attack.

Case Presentation

A 74-year-old man was attacked by a wild boar while on his way home from his farm in the daytime in winter 2017 on the rural Izu peninsula. He did not provoke the boar; however, hunters were hunting animals in the mountains near the farm around the same time. The boar bit his left leg, and he fell. The boar continued to bite the man's left foot, and the man delivered a few kicks to the boar's face with his right leg. The boar then bit his right foot and ran away. A nearby person called an ambulance, and the injured man was transferred to our hospital. Upon arrival at the hospital approximately 1

hour after the accident, he was alert with a blood pressure of 110/96 mm Hg, a heart rate of 82 beats/min, a respiratory rate of 20 breaths/min, and 99% of SpO₂ in room air. A physical examination revealed 3 bite wounds on the left leg and right foot (Figure 2). The wounds were irrigated with 5 L of sterilized saline applied with essentially no pressure, and the wounds were closed with sutures under local anesthesia. The wound closures had some gaps between the edges. The patient received a prescription of 1125 mg/day of amoxicillin/clavulanate for prophylaxis against infection and a tetanus toxoid booster. He did not receive any prophylactic injection for rabies because there have been no reports of rabies infection in any animals, including humans, in Japan since 1957, presumably due to the requirement established in 1950 that dogs be vaccinated by their owners.

The patient returned for a reevaluation the next day, at which point his wounds were found to be infected. Pus was drained, and the wound was irrigated again. A culture examination was not performed because it was holiday. After these treatments, his wounds improved, and the same antibiotic was continued. The wounds ultimately healed after 16 days.

Discussion

To our knowledge, this is the first medical report in English concerning bite wounds from a wild boar in Japan. We summarized the findings from the present and previous non-Japan-based English-language cases in Table 2.^{1,4-8} (and ecolumn.net, unpublished data, 2007) All were case reports. Ultimately, 665 case reports of

Table 1. Wild boar attacks on humans reported by mass media in Japan^{3,*}

Month, year	Prefecture	Place	Sex	Severity	Event	Number of attacked humans	Wound site
January, 1995*	Nara	Urban	Male	Severe	Crop work	16	?
December 2000*	Kanagawa	Urban	Female	Severe	A trip to school	4	?
November, 2004*	Nagano	Urban	Male	Fatal	Hunting	1	Thigh
December, 2005*	Saitama	Urban	Female and Male	Severe	Cleaning a garden; rescue of the attacked persons	3	?
October, 2006*	Nagasaki	Urban	Male	Severe	Fishing on a shore	2	Thigh, ?
November, 2006*	Kanagawa	Urban	Male	Fatal	?	1	Leg
January, 2007*	Kochi	Urban	Male	Fatal	?	1	Multiple
April, 2007*	Shizuoka	City	Unknown	Mild	In schoolyard	5	?
October, 2015 ³	Ehime	Urban	Unknown	Mild	A trip to school	3	?
March, 2016 ³	Shizuoka	Urban	Unknown	Mild	At park	1	?
February, 2016 ³	Ehime	Urban	Male	Fatal	Crop work	1	Leg

* [Ecolumn.net](http://ecolumn.net), unpublished data, 2007.

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